

The List

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Summary: "While I was helping your mother earlier, you know being the good friend that I am." Mary Margaret rolled her eyes at that, a smile playing on her lips. "I found this." He held up a worn out page from a notebook. "Mary Margaret's things to do before getting married." In an alternate universe where two friends decide to complete a bucket list over night.

The List

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The lavish garden behind the Kingsley Mansion was bustling with activity that late afternoon. The last day of preparations had everyone working quickly to finish everything in time for the big day tomorrow, and Mary Margaret Blanchard had retired up to her fiancé's room to take a break and watch everything for a moment. Kathryn Kingsley had taken the sister-of-the-groom persona to heart. She had a clipboard and was giving specific orders to the people on where to put what. Everything was coming together beautifully, and the bride-to-be smiled in contentment as she watched from the balcony.

James Kingsley, her fiancé, wanted a wedding outdoors, and she wanted hundreds of flowers. Looking at the decorations now, it would seem like the garden had grown another garden on top of it. There were still different colored flowers being carried in despite the late hour, and she couldn't help but think that Kathryn planned everything a little too much. Mary Margaret would rather not complain, given that the blonde had taken her responsibility as her own.

Part of her thinks that the job was perfect for Kathryn, given her

bossy attitude.

Footsteps clicking against the hardwood floor sounded from the inside, making her turn around. Emma Swan, one of her best friends, came into view with the thing she dreaded to see the most. The blonde grinned as she held up the beautiful white stilettos that Mary Margaret had dubbed the worst footwear she had to wear in her life. They were beautiful to the eyes, but deadly to the feet.

"Time to practice!" Emma sang as she bounced over to her side. Mary Margaret can only sigh and toe off her flats in exchange for the deathly contraptions, knowing that there was no way she was getting out of this. It had been five days since she started practicing, and she had yet to perfect walking in them. Her friend held both her hands as she slid into them. "Now," Emma grinned, letting her go and taking a few steps back. "Walk over to me."

Mary Margaret took a few steps forward and had to stop to maintain her balance. "These are going to kill me," she deadpanned, balancing with both arms outstretched to the sides. "Seriously, Emma. My wedding's tomorrow, and James is going to be really disappointed when he finds out he doesn't have a bride. Reason: death via heels."

Emma rolled her eyes. "Come on!" she encouraged, bouncing on her feet. Mary Margaret took a few tentative steps again and was actually doing better than the last few days. Emma's smile widened at her progress. "You're doing great."

Apparently, her friend spoke too soon. One of her heels got caught in one of the cracks on the stone floor. Emma immediately stepped forward to catch her before she fell on her face. Mary Margaret gave her a sheepish grin. "I can always go barefoot."

"No!" Emma exclaimed, almost scandalized at the thought. "You're walking in these tomorrow whether you like it or not. Everything already looks perfect. You will not ruin it by showing your feet to all of the guests tomorrow."

"Why? What's wrong with my feet?" Mary Margaret frowned, looking down on them. "They look fine to me."

Emma sighed before telling her to keep practicing. After about half an hour, Mary Margaret was close to tears and was about to whine like a child when her friend decided that it was enough for the day. The blonde took the heels and asked her a question as she slipped back into her flats. "What are you doing tonight? You know, after you've completely sabotaged my and Ruby's plans." She gave her a tight, humorless smile.

Mary Margaret grinned at her as she straightened up. "I'm going to sleep. Believe it or not, brides need to rest before their big day. Not go drinking and possibly be arrested for drug possession."

"Come on!" Emma whined. "It's Ruby. Do you not realize how much fun you're throwing away for sleep? It's your last night as a free woman! You should enjoy it, Mary Margaret."

She rolled her eyes as she followed Emma back into the house. "I'd rather not look like a zombie tomorrow. Thank you very much." They went down the staircase and into the vast foyer of the house, passing

by a couple of people walking to the kitchen to set up. "Have you seen James? I have yet to see him today."

"I'm not sure," Emma said slowly as she looked around. "I think I saw him with â€"."

Suddenly, someone lifted Mary Margaret by the waist, making her squeal in surprise. By the look on Emma's face, it was the man in question. "How's my fiancÃ©e doing?" James laughed before bringing her back down on the ground. Mary Margaret smiled widely as she turned around and gave him a long kiss.

Emma cleared her throat as the kiss continued and said, "All right. I'm just going to go. Um. I'll see you guys tomorrow. Make sure not to get her pregnant before then, James."

James pulled back with a grin as Mary Margaret laughed. He looked up at Emma and said, "See you tomorrow, Ems!" She turned around to see her friend raise a hand over her head as she walked out the open front door. "So," James said, making her turn back to him with a smile. "I'm checking in to see how you're doing. Are you having cold feet?"

"They're very warm. Don't you worry," she giggled before pulling the lapels of his blazer to pull his face to hers again. "I love you," she whispered after.

"I love you, too," James placed one last kiss on her temple before pulling away from her arms. "I have to go get ready. The boys are picking me up in an hour for my bachelor party."

Mary Margaret blinked at him for a moment. "Oh," she said, forgetting about that small detail. She couldn't help the jealousy that bubbled in her chest as she asked, "Will there be strippers involved?"

James laughed, stopping in the middle of the staircase to look down on her. "None of them as beautiful as you, baby. I love you. I'll see you tomorrow, okay?"

Mary Margaret smiled at him lovingly, "I'll be the one in white."

He grinned widely at that. "I'll be the one waiting at the altar." He gave her a wink before continuing his steps up to his bedroom. She bit her lower lip excitedly before Kathryn appeared in front of her with an order. That was her cue to get back to helping her future sister-in-law.

Which, if she were to be completely honest, still scared her.

* * *

><p>Later that evening, Mary Margaret retired back to her bedroom after a delicious dinner with her parents to pack up the rest of her things. James's parents brought them a house as a wedding gift near the outskirts out town, which surprised her immensely. They never showed their consent with her relationship with their son before. However, it was a charming home, and it was obvious that James had a hand in it because it was exactly what she wanted.<p>

She had just finished the last box when she heard her window slide

open. Mary Margaret had no need to turn around to know who came in. He was her childhood friend, and despite numerous times of her telling him that her house did have a door, he always came through the window. He plopped down on her bed with his hands behind his head, looking comfortable in a black shirt and jeans.

"Did you know that an ostrich's eye is bigger than its brain?" David Nolan asked with wide eyes, making her smile and roll her eyes. Ever since they were young, he had a thirst for knowledge that was quenched through his daily search of did-you-know facts on the Internet. She wasn't sure if his sources were reliable, but it never failed to humor her.

Mary Margaret laughed before lifting the box up from the top of her trunk. "Since when have you been researching on your species?"

David watched her put the last of the boxes by her door as he deadpanned, "Ha-ha. Seriously, though, isn't that amazing? I was searching how big their eyes are on my way here earlier, but the connection sucked. So, that didn't happen. Instead, I helped your mother fix some of your things when I found out you're not home." He was wearing a proud smile for that.

"Well, aren't you the sweetest thing?" she asked in an exaggerated Southern accent and reached over to pinch his cheek. She let out a laugh when he pulled her onto the bed with him. "David!" she shouted when he started to tickle her. "Oh, my God. David, stop!"

He laughed with her before letting her go. After the last remnants of her laughter had passed, she looked at him from her lying position and asked. "What are you doing here? I told you I'd be sleeping in tonight." She stretched her arms over her head to prove her point. "I have a long day tomorrow, and I need my rest."

"Just dropping by to check in on the bride," he smiled. She couldn't help but notice something off about him when he said that. Then realization brightened his features, making her forget immediately. "I found something interesting this morning. Good thing I saw it before your mother did." He stood up, and she lifted herself up with her elbows to look at him.

David grinned, producing something from his back pocket. "So," he said, unfolding the paper. Mary Margaret gave him an uncertain look at his odd behavior. "While I was helping your mother earlier, you know being the good friend that I am." She rolled her eyes at that. "I found this." He held up a worn out page from a notebook. Her eyes widened when she realized what it was. He cleared his throat and read, "Mary Margaret's things to do before getting married."

"Give that back!" she ordered, standing up and trying to reach for it. He laughed and held it up over their heads, making her growl much to his amusement. "David, I swear to God, I will kill you!"

"Aw, come on! Is that really the way to speak to your best friend?" David asked, placing his free hand over his chest dramatically. "I am wounded."

Mary Margaret huffed. "Emma's my best friend."

"Ouch," he frowned. "Replacing me with Blondie#2? That's not nice."

Blondie#1 was Kathryn Kingsley, his ex-girlfriend. Yeah, it does get more awkward. David glanced upward at the list written on the page and recited, "1. Go skinny-dipping in the harbor. Just the first one, and it's already so scandalous. I'm really liking this Mary Margaret on page."

"David, please give that back," she pleaded, tearing up a bit because of the embarrassment she felt. That was supposed to be personal. "No one was supposed to see that but me." She was finally able to reach it and snatched it out of his hands. He laughed a little as she folded it back and stuck it inside her back pocket.

He gave her a knowing look. "Oh, come on. Surely, you've shown that to someone. I mean, wouldn't you want that list completed?" He was surprised to see that she wiped away a stray tear. "Hey, are you crying? I'm sorry. I didn't mean to â€"."

"No," she sighed, waving him off. "It's fine. I was just surprised you saw it." When he didn't say anything, she continued, "And no, I've never shown this to anyone, not even James. He doesn't know about this, and he won't." She gave him a pointed look to which he nodded. "He isn't the adventurous type. I doubt he would even agree to let me do half the things written here."

David looked thoughtful for a moment before asking to see the page again silently. Mary Margaret gave him a hesitant look before sighing and handing it back to him without a word. She assessed his expression warily as his eyes scanned the page. "You know what?" he suddenly said, looking up to her with a smile. "You and I are going to do this."

"What?"

"Tonight."

"Are you crazy?" she asked in surprise.

"Maybe," he grinned before folding the paper. "But you're getting married tomorrow, and this list is meant to be completed before your wedding. It means that we have to do this tonight. Some of the things here, I can pull a few strings for you." He grinned excitedly at her. "Go get dressed."

"What â€" David," she said in exasperation, following him to the window. "I'm getting married. I'm stressed, and I need to rest before tomorrow's craziness catches up with me. I don't need to complete a bucket list tonight."

David shrugged, "When else are you going to do this? After tomorrow, you're going to Fiji for your honeymoon. When you come back, you'll have work to do. After a few months, there's no doubt you're knocked up." Heat rose up to her cheeks at his nonchalance. "You're going to have kids, and you'll be busy with them. You'll have no more time for yourself or forâ€|" He paused for a bit as if catching himself. "Me."

Mary Margaret smiled at him in compassion. "David," she said softly, placing a hand on his arm. "Come on. You'll always be my best friend, and I'm always going to see you. It's not like I'm leaving Storybrooke after I get married." She pushed him lightly to gain back

his attention. "I promise not to lock the windows so you can still sneak in."

David laughed at that before shaking his head. "I doubt James would like that." Before she could say anything, he held up a hand and laughed a little, "It doesn't matter. What matters is this." He held up the list in his hand. "We're going to do this, Mary Margaret, whether you like it or not. Think of it as our last adventure together."

"It won't be," she said, smiling at him as she took the page from his hand. "I'll make sure of that."

David only smiled at that before gesturing to her closet. "Get dressed. I'll meet you out front." Then he slipped out the window like he had done a thousand times before, leaving her standing there biting her lower lip with the list in her hands.

* * *

><p>Dressed comfortably in a gray sweater and shorts, Mary Margaret walked down the staircase leading to the foyer of the house. There were murmurs coming from the kitchen, making her curious. She was still fixing her watch around her wrist as she entered. "Mom? Dad?" she called out as she did.<p>

Her parents were standing around the island in the middle of the room with steaming mugs in front of them. They both looked up when she entered and smiled at her. "Hey, sweetheart," Leo Blanchard greeted. She walked over to kiss him on the cheek. He regarded her outfit and asked, "You're going out with the girls tonight?"

"What did I tell you about getting your beauty sleep?" Eva Blanchard scolded in a motherly tone.

"No, I'm not going out with the girls tonight," she said before dropping a kiss on her mother's cheek. "David is taking me â€" somewhere. I â€" uh â€" we have a few things to do before the wedding. I promised I wouldn't be out too late. I do want a fresh look tomorrow."

Eva smiled before giving her a knowing look. "I hope you're not planning to elope with that boy. If you are, you should go up and change because that just won't do."

"Mom!" she said with wide eyes. "That's â€" gross. He's David."

"Yeah," Eva nodded with a grin. Leo brought his mug up to hide his smile. "David who looks at you like the sun rises and sets with you, and you look at him the same way." She brought her mug up to take a sip as well. From the smell, Mary Margaret knew that it was hot chocolate with cinnamon. Her mother's latest invention that â€" she was certain- was sent from heaven above.

Mary Margaret rolled her eyes before saying, "Well. I have to go. You know how he is when I'm late."

"Like me, when I'm waiting for your mother," Leo sent her a wink.

"Goodbye, Dad, Mom," she said pointedly. "He's waiting for me out front. Love you both. I'll try not to be out too late, but don't wait up."

"Love you!" her mother called out as she walked out the kitchen.
"Text me so I'll know you're still alive."

"Bye!"

* * *

><p>Learn how to ride a bike again

When Mary Margaret walked out the front door, she smiled smugly at David who was leaning against his car with folded arms and an annoyed expression on his face. He hated it whenever he had to wait longer than he should have, and she took her time in choosing what to wear including her underwear given that at one point he will be seeing her in them. He pulled himself up from the car when she neared him.

"What are we doing first, chief?" Mary Margaret grinned at him. David gave her a smile before going to the back of his car where a bike was mounted on the bike rack. Her eyes widened when he placed it in front of her because it was the mountain bike he owned. It was way too big for someone her size. "Are you kidding me?"

"Either this," he grinned. "Or we're using Henry's tricycle." She groaned and threw her head back, trying to hide her smile from him. She always smiled whenever her adorable ring bearer was mentioned. The mayor's son was beyond cute. "Given that this was the most innocent of all, I thought we should get this out of the way first," he said wryly.

They walked to the middle of the quiet street where she got on and wasn't able to keep her feet planted firmly on the ground because of the bike's height. "Just put your feet on the pedals," he instructed gently, sensing her fear. "I'll hold it. I promise, I won't let you fall."

"You better not," she warned, gripping the handlebars tightly in anxiety. "My dress won't cover any bruises I'll get on my arms." When the bike started to tilt to the side because of her weight, she let out a yelp, "I'm going to die on this thing!"

"No, you're not," David laughed. "Start pedaling. I won't let go." She gripped the handlebars as she did, and David started to run to keep up with her pace. She let out a nervous laugh when she realized that she was actually doing it.

"I'm doing it!" she exclaimed happily. He chuckled at that and let the handlebar he was holding go. "Wait, don't â€"!"

"Look ahead!" he ordered, keeping one hand firmly gripping the back of the seat. She did, but the bike continued to wobble dangerously. David immediately caught the handlebar again to keep it upright, and she stopped pedaling. "You nearly got it," he grinned at her proudly.

She sighed. "I nearly fell."

"That's normal," he assured her. "You want to go again?"

Mary Margaret did. About half an hour later and a few curses, she was actually riding the bike on her own. She laughed when she realized that she had left David behind and turned the bike around to go back to him. She was still getting the hang of the brakes, so he immediately caught her when the bike started to wobble. "See, that wasn't so bad," he smiled at her. "Now, you're over your fear of falling into ditches."

There was an incident in her childhood that made her despise bikes. It involved a bike and a ditch, but it won't get any more specific than that.

"Don't remind me," she groaned but couldn't help the smile on her face. David handed her the list and gave her a pen. She looked for the item and drew a line through the words proudly. She actually accomplished one of them — one of the easy ones but still, and she was excited for what's next.

* * *

><p>Break into someone's house

Mary Margaret can't help but appreciate the quiet streets of Storybrooke at night. It was one of the things she loved about her town. Everyone rose with the sun and retired with it. It was a quarter to eleven according to the digital clock in David's car. They were speeding down Main Street to the one place that David promised to be the perfect place to break into in the middle of the night.

The house was the home of the Jones brothers where Killian, David's best friend, lived. His father gave it to him after he had passed, and he lived there with his older brother, Liam. According to David, Liam was away on vacation with his girlfriend, so that leaves Killian in there sleeping like a rock. He promised that his friend would only wake up when you throw a bucket of cold water over his head.

Mary Margaret would rather not know how he knew about that fact.

It was a charming house near the harbor. Killian and his family loved the sea and often took their boat out for leisure. David turned off the ignition and gestured for her to follow him quietly. He opened the gate, and they made their way to the backyard without making any sound. There was a big tree near one of the balconies, which was conveniently Killian's room.

David showed her which of the branches to step on and pull on, something he had always done since they were younger. It wasn't long before they were both standing on the balcony, and Mary Margaret could feel her heart beating loudly. She had never done anything illegal before. Breaking and entering was definitely illegal. To be honest, she'd rather not be in jail on her wedding day, but she was too excited to care about that right there.

Her friend quietly walked to the French doors and opened it. She winced with him when it creaked open. They padded slowly across the

room, watching the lump of a man lying across the bed who was snoring. She let out a snicker to which David immediately shushed. They stood at the foot of the bed for a moment before David whispered, "Have you seen Paper Towns?"

She threw him a look. "You watched the movie without reading the book, didn't you?"

"Sue me," he deadpanned before producing a bottle of Veet out of nowhere. Her eyes widened at the implication. "Will you do the honors?"

"No," she whispered as she shook her head adamantly. "I wanted to break into someone's house, not take off someone's eyebrows!"

David grinned. "Oh, come on. You've gotten this far, young urchin. Are you really going to let this opportunity pass you by?" Killian snored particularly loud at that moment, as if agreeing to what David just said. She can't help the devilish grin that appeared on her face. "That's my girl," David smiled when she took the bottle from him.

She walked over to where Killian's head was laying. Thankfully, he was on his back, making her job much easier. She placed a substantial amount on her forefinger before gently applying it on his left eyebrow. She immediately took off her hand when she finished, holding her breath since he looked like he had stopped breathing. When he let out another snore, it was then she released a sigh of relief.

David had his back turned to her and was looking at one of the pictures Killian had framed on top of his table. Mary Margaret walked over to him and whispered, "What are you looking at?"

He pointed to one of the frames where two young boys had their arms over each other's shoulders and laughing. They both have what looked like chocolate ice cream all over their faces. It was adorable. "I think my mom took that picture," he said softly. She took his hand in both of hers and leaned her head on his shoulder. Ruth passed away only last year, so the wound was still fresh.

After a moment, he shook himself from his thoughts and pulled away from her grasp. She frowned at that but couldn't say anything as he walked to Killian's side. He looked at his friend for a moment before grabbing a tissue from the bedside table. She watched with bated breath as he wiped off the cream from his eyebrow.

For several seconds, nothing happened. They thought that they were off the hook. Then Killian's eyes flew open, and he jumped up the bed. David shouted, "Run!" They bottled out the door, and he closed the door behind him. The loud thump indicated that Killian bumped into the door, making her laugh loudly. They were out the front door in less than a minute, and he was turning on the ignition.

"Go, go, go!" Mary Margaret shouted as she looked back at Killian standing at the front door in his boxers. The dark haired man was approaching them fast. The tires squealed as David floored the gas pedal. She couldn't help but laugh when she heard Killian shouting and cursing at them. "That was awesome."

"I told you he slept like a rock," David grinned jokingly, making her

laugh in delight.

* * *

><p>Go stargazing on a high place

Mary Margaret was not fond of heights, so stargazing somewhere she might fall to her death was something that she wanted to overcome. David drove them back to his place where he said that they could go up to the roof to do just that. She found herself in David's kitchen after the whole Killian fiasco. He was preparing his self-proclaimed best PB&J sandwich in the whole state. To be honest, she didn't realize she was hungry until he suggested some food.

They quickly finished their impromptu meal and washed it down with a glass of fresh milk from the fridge. After placing everything in the sink and David telling her to that he'll take care of it in the morning, they made their way up to the roof through the window of his bedroom. All the way up, she tried not to look down. She could handle moderate heights, but not the four floors of his house.

The stars looked amazing that night as they settled down. When she looked up at the night sky, she rested her hands on her full stomach and said, "Thanks for the PB&J, by the way. They were delicious."

David grinned. "I told you. Best in the state."

She giggled before propping herself up with her elbows to look at him. So, I thought we were going all the innocent stuff first. How come this came after the breaking and entering?"

"You see, my dear friend. It was something Margo Roth Spiegelman taught me in that two-hour movie." Mary Margaret threw her head back at his serious tone. "One must pause and reflect on one's achievements." He gestured towards the general direction of Killian's house. "And I wanted to make sure that he hasn't called the cops on us. We are going to do one more thing that is technically illegal, after all. We better make sure we don't get caught."

She laughed. "I'm sure he's planning how to get you back. I think he knew it was you. If I were you, I'd watch my back tomorrow at the wedding. I did invite you both and expect you on your best behavior."

He just smiled at that. "Probably." She lied back down on the rough plane of the roof and can't help but release a sigh of contentment. "This is nice," he added after a while. "I'm glad you have this on your list. I haven't done this in a long time."

Mary Margaret smiled. "The last time we did this was after your ninth birthday party. Your mom helped us with the picnic blanket, and we watched the stars all night. Then we whined when she said it was bedtime."

"You said we'll sleep outside," David laughed, feeling nostalgic. "Then she said there were wolves out here at night. Then I pretended to be one and chased you all the way back to my room."

She laughed, remembering. "Yeah. That seemed like a long time ago."

They were quiet as they watched the stars twinkling down at them. "Thank you for talking me into doing this. I've never had this much fun in a long time."

"That's because you haven't been hanging out with me for a while," he nudged her playfully, making her giggle. "You're always with Blondie#2 or the waitress."

"They have names, David," she defended her friends. "Don't tell them, but I think I like hanging out with you more."

David grinned. "Of course. I'm awesome."

"Don't get cocky," she nudged him, making him chuckle. She turned her head to look at him fully. It was the first time in a long time that she really looked at him, and she hated to admit that David was handsome. She never really appreciated the way he looked before, wrinkling her nose every time someone compliments him to her. Then they'll ask her if they were together. She would say no and can't help but feel like she should've said yes to avoid the longing gazes they threw his way.

She was allowed to be possessive. David was her best friend.

But he never chose any of them. The only girlfriend he ever had was Kathryn Kingsley, and their breakup was the worst in Storybrooke history. They were fighting in the middle of Main Street without Mary Margaret's knowledge since she was busy at the hospital. Rumors circulated around town that it was about her, but she didn't believe it. When she asked David about it, he wouldn't tell her the reason why.

Kathryn confronted her about it days later, telling her that she was stupid not to see what was right in front of her. It was the first time she had seen the blonde cry and actually look sincere when she said, "You just don't see it, do you? The way he says your name, the way he looks at you like a blind man seeing for the first time, the way he laughs around you. You don't see it."

That was why Kathryn was surprised when James introduced Mary Margaret to his family as his girlfriend. Kathryn gave her a smile but didn't say anything. When the engagement was announced, the blonde buried herself in the preparations and was always on the edge with her. Mary Margaret didn't understand it. David never did the things she said, and he never talked to her about his feelings.

Why was Kathryn so angry with her?

"I thought we were looking at the stars," David grinned with his eyes closed serenely. Mary Margaret snapped out of her reverie and turned her head back without a word. "You know, if you're secretly in love with me, now is the perfect time to say so."

Ignoring the burst of butterflies in her stomach at his words, Mary Margaret scoffed. "Please."

* * *

><p>Skinny-dipping in the harbor

They were standing at the end of the walkway at the docks after their stargazing escapade had finished. David gestured for her to go first, making her sigh. This was her idea. She looked ahead at the calm waters and couldn't help her shiver when she pulled her sweater over her head. She couldn't help but glance sideways at David, who looked like he was trying hard not to stare. She smirked to herself as she stepped out of her shorts.

"Well," she said, standing there in her bra and panties. Her hands were on her waist. She remembered one conversation they had long ago about women wearing matching underwear. He expressed his "well" appreciation for them, and she knew that he loved the color black. She knew he had him hooked. "Your turn."

David shook his head as he laughed shyly. He pulled his shirt over his head, and it was her turn not to stare too openly. She knew that he worked out, so why was she so surprised to see that? She tried to keep her expression neutral as he stood there in his boxers. She can't help but smirk, "Nice. We match." He looked down at his black boxers and chuckled.

She stood nearer to the edge as she took off her remaining clothes. Her heart was pounding loudly against her chest and in her ears as she executed the perfect dive. It was pitch black down there, so she quickly made her way up to the surface. She took a deep breath when she did and heard a splash beside her. She immediately knew that this was a bad idea.

It was freezing cold.

"This is your worst idea yet, Blanchard!" David shouted when he resurfaced. She laughed when she saw his teeth chattering. "Are you laughing at me?" he asked incredulously before splashing water towards her, making her squeal.

"Don't do that!" she giggled before swimming away. They immediately made their way back to the walkway and pulled themselves up. Mary Margaret laughed when she noticed that his butt was particularly whiter than the rest of his body. When they were both dressing up, she asked, "Have you had a tan lately? How white were you?"

David actually blushed, making her grin as she hooked her bra. "Ah " that. I was hoping you wouldn't see that."

Mary Margaret pulled over her sweater and said, "How can I not see that? It's really white."

"Ha-ha," he deadpanned, causing her to laugh. "It was when my dad took me and my brother out to Florida. He pranked me by replacing my sunscreen with tanning lotion." She winced at the thought. "Good thing I wasn't out that long when I found out. I was able to take it off without causing too much damage. Doesn't mean he didn't have his fun." He pulled his shirt over his head.

She laughed as they started to walk back to the car. "Well, if it's any consolation, I think your white butt looks adorable."

David laughed loudly at that. "Careful, Miss Blanchard," he said with a teasing glint in his eye. "Or I'd think you're flirting with me."

Dance in the rain

"It's not raining, so I had to use some reinforcements," David gestured over to Graham who was squatting on the roof with a hose on hand. Mary Margaret couldn't help but laugh at the bored expression on his face. When he noticed them looking at him, he gave them a smile and a wave. She waved back as well, blushing slightly at the knowing smirk he threw their way.

Graham had always teased her about David. She always argued that there was nothing going on between them. "Oh, please," he would laugh whenever she visited him at the sheriff's station with Granny's on hand. "Everyone in Storybrooke's betting on you two, you know. Some say it's just a matter of time."

"Well," she had said. "They can stop talking about it. David doesn't have any feelings for me."

Graham had thrown an exasperated glance over to her before biting into his grilled cheese sandwich. "Sure, he doesn't."

The water pouring down on them lightly brought her back to the present. She laughed like a little girl much to the amusement of David. He grinned and offered his hand to her, "May I have this dance, Miss Blanchard?"

"You may," Mary Margaret grinned, taking his hand and making a little curtsy. He twirled her around first before pulling her into his arms, making her laugh. She leaned her temple against the side of his chin as they swayed to the old song playing from David's car. This was perfect. She caught the faint smell of his cologne on his neck and wondered why she felt a stab in her heart as she did.

Then it clicked. Tonight had been nothing short of incredible. All her life, all of her adventures with David had always been wonderful and memorable. They were halfway through her list, and she doesn't want it to end. She promised him earlier that their adventures wouldn't end because she was getting married, but now she felt like this really was the last one — at least for a long while. She was going to have an entirely different life starting tomorrow, a life that appealed to her at first because she does love James. But now that she thought about it, it was a life without David, too.

"David," she whispered. Tears began to sting her eyes causing her to blink them rapidly, thankful that they weren't looking at each other when she did. When he hummed to tell her that he was listening to her, she continued, "I'm scared."

"Of what?" he asked softly, his hand sliding down to the middle of her back. She stepped closer to him and placed his head on his chest. She didn't know what to feel when she heard the racing of his heart. "Mary Margaret?"

She pulled back to look at him in the eye and felt her heart stop at what she saw. It felt like what everyone has been telling her all these years suddenly made sense to her. The he looked at her, the things he did for her, even the way he was holding her, everything finally made sense. "What if I'm making a huge mistake?" she

whispered, looking into his eyes. He looked surprised. "What if I do?"

"What are you talking about?" he asked softly. "Of course, you're not."

"What if I am? What if he's not the one for me?"

"You're just having cold feet," he said with a tight smile. She felt her heart break at his tone and at the look on his face. He was hurting. He had been hurting all this time, and he didn't say anything. And it was her fault. What kind of a friend was she? "Do you love him?" he asked.

Part of her wanted to say no, because she knew what she'd see if she said yes. But she couldn't lie to him, and she couldn't betray James like that. Her heart was pounding as she stammered, "I do, but..."

"Then that's what matters," David interrupted her, pulling back from her arms. She didn't miss the hurt in his eyes as he placed a kiss on the back of her hand. "Thank you for the dance, Mary Margaret." The pretend-rain had stopped, and it felt like she was pushed back into reality. "It was lovely."

"David," she said, grabbing his hand. He looked back at her warily, as if pleading her not to say what he thought she would say. She gulped. "Thank you..." she settled with that, frowning at the relief on his face. "For the dance."

He grinned. Only then did she realize that he used it to mask what he was really feeling. "I never knew dancing under the rain could be this fun." Mary Margaret can only smile at that.

* * *

><p>See the northern lights

"Where are we going?" Mary Margaret asked, looking over at him. They had both changed into warmer clothes after taking a quick shower at David's house. It was nearing half past 2 in the morning by the time they arrived at the town line. David was quiet the entire ride there, only smiling at her whenever she asked the question and saying, "You'll see."

When they started trekking into the dark forest with flashlights on hand, Mary Margaret caught up with his long strides and asked, "You're not mad at me, are you?"

David chuckled. "What? Why would I be mad at you?"

She shrugged. "I don't know," she answered, sounding younger for a second. "You're quiet. You're never quiet around me." Then she realized something and frowned. "Are you ignoring me?"

"I'm not ignoring you," he answered slowly as if answering a child. "I'm keeping where we're going a secret. There's a difference."

"Well, it does feel like you're ignoring me," she muttered as if he

didn't say anything on the contrary. They were both quiet as they walked forward before she asked again in exasperation, "David, why are you ignoring me?"

"I'm not â€", " David stopped to close his eyes and exhale his annoyance through his nose. "I'm not ignoring you. I'm just trying to remember the trail. The last thing we need is to get lost in here and make you late for your own wedding." Mary Margaret noticed the bitterness in his voice and decided not to comment on it.

If anything, tonight forced her to pay attention. She noticed that he stiffened whenever she mentioned anything concerning them and the wedding. She noticed that he kept stealing glances at her at odd times and looked like he wanted to say something but chose not to. She noticed that he sighed a lot that night, something he normally never did around her.

It took a couple more minutes before they reached a clearing. She couldn't help but take out her list to see if she had written anything close to seeing a garden in the middle of the night. It does look beautiful, and the grass was dotted with flowers. Maybe it was something that David just wanted to show her.

Her friend threw a grin over at her direction before taking off running across the clearing. The responding smile on her face fell as she realized that he was getting farther away, suddenly fearing that he was leaving her in the middle of the forest alone.

"Wait!" she called out, following him and not wanting to look back in case she might see something horrifying. She was not a big fan of the dark. "Wait, David! Where are you going?"

"Turn off the flashlight!" he shouted, still running around the clearing but not going any farther from her. She stopped in confusion, looking down to flip the switch. When she looked up, the air had changed, and she felt all of her breath whoosh out of her system as she looked up in wonder.

Thousands of fireflies had lit up the clearing, flickering like tiny little green stars in the air. Mary Margaret let out a breathless laugh as she circled around to see all of them at once. David suddenly grabbed her hand and pulled her with him, laughing as they went. The fireflies danced around them as he pulled her into his arms. She gasped and placed her hands on his chest, looking up at him.

David stared at her for a moment, as if memorizing every detail of her face. Then his expression changed as he smiled down at her and explained, "Northern lights." Her eyes widened at the realization. "I didn't know how to bring us to where they are, so I decided to bring the lights to us." She couldn't help the tears that sprung in her eyes as she felt a burst of love for him explode inside her chest. "Good thing they're still around or else this would've been a complete disaster."

"I love it," she said breathlessly, smiling up at him like he was the most precious thing in the world. Nobody has ever done anything like this for her before, not even James. "I don't know what to say. This â€" this is amazing." She looked around at the fireflies surrounding them as her tears fell. "I've never seen anything more beautiful in

my life."

David was looking at her the entire time she was talking and murmured as he wiped away her tears, "I can think of a few things."

Her heart stopped at the implication of his words. Mary Margaret felt like she couldn't breathe as she looked up at him. The way he looked at her was as same as he always done, but this time was different. This time, she paid enough attention to see that sparkle in his eye and the corners of his lips turning up in a soft smile. They were right. Kathryn, Graham, her mother. They were right.

David Nolan was in love with her.

Before he could say anything, Mary Margaret leaned up and pressed her lips against his. He didn't respond at first, surprised at her reaction to his statement. It wasn't long before their lips started moving together, and she can't help but gasp when David pulled her closer to him and lifted her up to the tips of her toes. Warmth started to pool at the pit of her stomach, making her run her hand up through his hair as the kiss continued.

Then her eyes flew open when she realized what they were doing. This was David. She was kissing David. David, her best friend who wasn't her groom tomorrow. Mary Margaret immediately detached herself from him and stepped away, shocked at her own actions. "Mary Margaret," David said as he stepped forward, looking dazed and trying to regain back his breathing. "I â€" I'm sorry I shouldn't have â€"."

"No," she stopped him. "No, you don't get to apologize. I did this. That â€" that wasn't â€" I shouldn't have â€" that wasn't supposed to happen." She gasped with tears pooling in her eyes. "Oh, my God. James."

A flash of hurt passed through his features at the mention of her fianc 's name, and it was something that caught her attention. Immediately, he put on a brave face and stepped forward. "Nothing's happened," he tried to assure her, grabbing her shaking hands. "Relax, Mary Margaret. Nothing happened. Nothing's changed. No one has to know."

Her eyes snapped up to his, and she pulled her hands back harshly. "How could you do that? How could you just bury everything you're feeling just to make me feel better? Why do you do that to yourself, David?"

David looked at a loss for words for a moment, surprised that she noticed that. Mary Margaret can't help but resent the fact that he was surprised that she cared. Of course, she cared. He was David. "What?" he tried to act innocent, but she wasn't buying it. "What are you talking about?"

"Don't," she warned with steely eyes. "Don't act like you're not hurting because of me."

He kept the innocent facade for a moment, still trying to convince her that he had no idea. But when he realized that it wasn't working anymore, he sighed, resignation on his face. "What do you want me to say, Mary Margaret?" he asked softly. "You're getting married tomorrow. Nothing I will say is going to change that."

"Be angry with me!" she insisted as she threw up her hands in exasperation. He looked at her like she was insane. "Be angry that I seldom showed you how much you mean to me. Be angry that I've been ignoring everyone telling me that we belong together all this time, and I see it just now. Be angry that now was the only time I paid enough attention to see I've been hurting you all this time. Be angry that I pushed you aside for so long that I didn't see what people are talking about because I didn't want to see it."

The look on David's face angered her because he wasn't angry with her at all. He was looking at her with love, understanding, and concern. He was looking at her like she was the most beautiful thing he'd ever seen. It was then Mary Margaret realized what she said. "We belong together?" he asked, fear in his voice but also hope. "You see it now?"

Her lips trembled as she spoke. "Why didn't you say anything?" she asked. "You've always looked out for me. You've always put me first. You've always treated me like a princess. You've been doing that all this time, and I â€". Her voice caught. "I've been so blind. Why didn't you say anything, David?"

David lifted his shoulders up as he gave her a sad smile. "You never saw me that way," he confessed. "I didn't want to ruin what we have. Our friendship's too important for me. You're too important to me."

Mary Margaret bit her lower lip to contain her tears. "Do you love me?" she whispered shakily.

"Mary Margaret," he whispered, shaking his head. "It doesn't matter â€".

"Do you love me?" she repeated, more forcefully this time.

David closed his eyes for a moment and sighed. Mary Margaret had that look in her eyes, the look that can make him do anything for her if she just asked. So, it was there in the middle of the dark forest, the fireflies fading in the background where he confessed the thing that he had been keeping from her all these years.

"Yes," he breathed out, making her hold back a whimper. "Yes, I'm in love with you. I always have, and I always will."

* * *

><p>Get a tattoo

The drive back to Main Street was a quiet one. During the ride, Mary Margaret realized how tired she was after all the crying she did back in the forest. Everything they did that night started to catch up with her physically, making her fall asleep several times in the car. It was nearing 4AM when David stopped the car in front of a still-open tattoo parlor a few blocks from the diner, located near Gold's pawnshop. His hand on her arm jolted her out of her sleep.

David had a lopsided grin as he turned off the ignition, noting her tired face. She rubbed her eyes and stretched her arms over her head

as she yawned. "Someone's getting tired," he commented with a quiet chuckle. She glowered at him. "Are you ready?" he asked, gesturing towards the shop several steps from her side of the car.

Mary Margaret turned to look at it before smiling, "Yeah." David grinned at her tone and followed her out of the car. He opened the door for her as he always does, and they were both hit with the intense smell of ink as they entered. There was a brunette wearing all black behind the counter who looked up when they came in. She grinned as she sauntered over to them, recognition in her expression.

"David Nolan," she laughed before they shared a hug. Mary Margaret stepped aside for a moment as they embraced, feeling a bit out of place. "I'm surprised to see you here at this hour. You never told me that you're interested to be inked before." She glanced over at the wall clock hanging over the door, "At 4AM, no less."

"Ah," David grinned at her. "No. Not me. Lacey, this is Mary Margaret. Mary Margaret wants to get a tattoo before she gets married tomorrow." He was looking at her with a gentle smile on his face as he spoke, making her heart leap to her throat. It was something that he probably did often, but she just wasn't aware of it.

Lacey and she shook hands when introduced. "It's nice to meet you, Mary Margaret. I would assume you're the bride at the Kingsley wedding happening tomorrow, am I wrong?" When Mary Margaret shook her head, she grinned. "All right. Tell me what you want, and I'll get it done. It's on the house. Think of it as a wedding gift."

Mary Margaret immediately knew that she liked this girl. "Thank you," she smiled brightly. "You should definitely swing by tomorrow if you have the time, Lacey. I'm sure we have enough cake for everybody."

Lacey laughed, nodding. "Oh, I'm sure you do. Thank you, but I think I'll pass. It's not you, Mary Margaret. It's that Kathryn girl I'm trying to avoid. Not a big fan."

They started to walk over to her work station as Mary Margaret whispered excitedly, "Oh, don't worry. I'm not a big fan either. I'm just happy she was eager enough to take over the preparations. Took a lot of things off my plate."

Lacey giggled at that. They then proceeded to talk about the wedding and the process of tattoos as she browsed the clear book containing different designs she can choose from. They didn't notice David quietly retreating to where Lacey's table was, a pen and paper on hand, and started to write.

* * *

><p>The car slowly rolled to a stop in front of the Blanchard house a little after 5AM. David pulled the hand brake before leaning back on his seat to look over at her. Mary Margaret had a small smile on her face and had yet to stop glancing over to the firefly tattoo she had on her wrist. She didn't look at him when Lacey told him to come over and check his friend's new tattoo out. David didn't comment on it much other than saying it was beautiful, knowing that anything else he may have said might open another can of worms.<p>

"So," he said quietly. "I guess this is our last stop for tonight."

"Yeah," Mary Margaret said shyly, tracing her fingers over the small tattoo. He glanced down at it for a moment before looking back at her face. "David," she whispered, looking over at him. When their eyes met, he felt like his tongue got stuck in his throat. He highly doubted she knew just how beautiful she was. "I can't thank you enough for tonight. I never would've done any of the things on that list if it wasn't for you."

He gave her a grin. "You're welcome."

They were quiet again, neither of them wanting to leave just yet. "Mary Margaret," he said softly with his eyes trained on the steering wheel. "I have to apologize. I'm sorry for being such a coward all these years." When she understood, she looked down at her hands immediately. "I had plenty of chances to tell you how I felt, but I justâ€¦ I don't know how." He sighed before glancing back at her. "I guess, I never felt worthy enough to be loved like that by you."

"David," she whispered, her brow furrowing slightly. "That's impossible."

"You deserve all the love in the world, Mary Margaret," he continued, looking at her fully now. She can't help the tears in her eyes as she saw sincerity in his. "You deserve everything the world has to offer, and I couldn't see anyone else who could do that than James." Her lips trembled as she tried to hide her tears from him. "Knowing that you're loved and happy," he said, lifting her chin up to make her see his smile. "That's all I ever want for you."

She sniffed and pulled him into a hug. "I don't deserve you," she whispered tearfully as she rested her chin on his shoulder. Attempting to lighten up the mood, she pulled back and gave him a small smile. "I thought you're going to save the good stuff for your speech later, Nolan."

David gave her a wry smile. "Nah," he chuckled, grabbing her hand and rubbing his thumb over her knuckles. "You're the only one who needs to hear this from me." He placed a kiss on the back of her hand and said, "Now. Get out of my car, and get some rest. You have about two hours left before your mother barges into your room with stylists in tow."

She groaned despite her tears. "God, don't remind me." David laughed at that before releasing her hand. Still, no one attempted to move. "If anything, I know that tonight was one of the best nights of my life, and doing all that â€" what we did tonight â€" I couldn't imagine anyone else doing them with me."

He smiled, touched. "I had fun, too." Mary Margaret gave him a smile as well before placing a kiss on his cheek. He watched her as she got her seatbelt off and was about to open the door when he said, "Wait."

When she turned around, he leaned forward and captured her lips with his. She was frozen for a second before she relaxed and started

kissing him back. David squeezed his eyes shut, telling himself to remember this. Remember this. After a couple of seconds, he pulled back with his eyes still closed, and whispered, "I love you."

David opened his eyes to see her blinking at him in surprise, her mouth shaped like a small o. She gulped before turning her head back to the door and letting herself out. As the door slammed shut, he watched her run to the porch with weird warmth spreading in his chest. At least, he got to do the thing he had always wanted to do whenever he drove her home. He waited for her to go inside before driving away, not seeing the second glance she threw his way before closing the door.

* * *

><p>Receive a letter from a loved one

Giggles came from the spare bedroom in the Kingsley Mansion where the bride and her bridesmaids were currently set up. There were flowers and champagne around the room, and a bunch of dresses were hanging everywhere. All the girls were in their robes and had curlers in their hair, except for the bride. Her hair was pulled back in a loose bun behind her head with some curls framing her face, and her make-up was flawless. She was wearing a lavender dress that she would replace later with her wedding gown.

Mary Margaret was smiling brightly as Ruby raised a glass for a toast. "To the most beautiful bride the town has ever seen," she gushed, making Mary Margaret blush. "May you have the most perfect wedding and an even more perfect wedding night tonight." Several hoots and hollers made her cheeks redder than before.

The door opened, and Emma came in still in her jeans and sweater. Her eyes were wide as she made a direct beeline to the bride sitting on the chair in front of the vanity. "Mary Margaret Blanchard, your best man just came by my apartment to tell me to tell you that he's not going to make it to the wedding."

"What?" Mary Margaret asked, panic in her voice. David wouldn't do that to her. Seeing the panic on the bride's face also made everyone else in the room panic except for Ruby who was too busy with the champagne. Emma immediately shushed the entire room with a shout, "Everyone, shut up for a moment!"

When everyone calmed down, Emma got everyone's attention including Ruby's. "Now, nobody panic. I'll take care of it. I came by only because he told me to give this to you before the ceremony." The blonde handed her an envelope before pushing everyone out of the room to give her some privacy. Before she went out the door, she turned around and told her, "Don't worry. I'll make sure he gets his ass here in time. He's not getting away that easily."

With everyone out of the room, the place fell totally silent with her being its only occupant. She quickly tore the envelope with shaking hands and unfolded the stationery inside. There was a faint smell coming from the paper, making her sniff it for a second. She couldn't help but roll her eyes at the familiarity. It was the same stationery she had in her room, and David loved the smell of them. He must have stolen some last night when she wasn't looking.

_Mary Margaret, _

_ This isn't a goodbye letter that much I can assure you. I'm writing this letter as Lacey proceeds to ink your hand, and I can't tell you how beautiful you look when you laugh. Everything you've done tonight made me so proud of you. They were the things that scared you, and I loved that I was able to witness you conquer them all. You're one hell of a woman, Blanchard. I can only hope James knows how lucky he is to have you as his wife._

_ I'm writing this to you because 1) It is one of the things on your list. If I remember specifically, it's number seven. You wanted to receive a letter from a loved one, and here it is. You didn't specifically say that you wanted it from family, so I can only assume I'm a loved one. 2) I'm writing because I won't be there to make my speech. Don't think that I can't picture the face you're pulling right now. It kills me to think about it, but seeing you marry someone else might kill me faster. I don't think I'll be able to handle giving you away. So, I'll be making my speech here. Because, like I said in the car this morning, you're the only one who needs to hear it (or in this case, read it) anyway. And lastly, 3) I'm leaving town today._

_ I won't allow you to follow me. You shouldn't. I am coming back, I promise. I just need some time away. _

_ Here's my speech. _

_ Let me tell you a few things about Mary Margaret Blanchard. She's a pain in the ass. More often than not, she's the one responsible for the bruises I've accumulated over the years, whether it be climbing trees with her or exploring the rock formation on the beach. She always had an eye for adventure, but she wasn't able to do everything she wanted because she got busy with school and work. She's the most hardworking and selfless person I know. She's the kind of girl who loves her parents so much that she's willing to give up her dream to make sure that they're happy. She wanted to be a teacher, but her parents wanted her to be a doctor. So, here she is, one of the top doctors in Storybrooke General. If you ask me, she deserves to be recognized in a bigger hospital. But as I said, she loves her parents so much. She doesn't want to leave them because of her career, so she stayed._

_ And I'm selfish enough to say that I'm glad she did because I couldn't imagine life without her. She's the first person I run to when good things happen and when bad things happen. She knows exactly what to do and the right words to say. When my mother died, she was the one there for me besides my family. She even got into a fight with James because of it, and it sucked for me to see her cry. But at the same time, it warmed my heart knowing that I meant that much to her._

_ To be honest, a letter wouldn't be able to encapsulate everything we've gone through together, Mary Margaret. You're someone I love and will always love for the rest of my life. Though you're not the one I'm going to spend the rest of my life with, I am glad that you were able to find someone meant for you. James is going to make you happy. If he doesn't, he's going to have to face me, and that won't be pretty._

Well, I'll still be pretty. He won't be.

_ Lastly, I want you to know that I'm in love with you. No, I am not asking to hear it back from you, and I'm not saying this to make you question your decision about marrying James. I'm saying it because you deserve to know. I've been a coward all these years, and I had my chance and I blew it. You deserve someone better, kinder, braver than me. I have no doubt that James will be just that. You're going to grow old together and have a lot of kids. They're going to love you because you're you. It doesn't get better than that._

_ I love you. I'll see you soon._

David

Tears were silently streaming down her cheeks as she read the letter. Thankfully, her make-up was waterproof due to Ruby's thinking that she might cry during the ceremony. After reading, she immediately went to rummage through her purse that was sitting on the couch and pulled out her list. When she had crossed the seventh one, there was one more thing left on the list that she hasn't done.

10. Surprise yourself

"Mary Margaret?" someone called from the door. She immediately wiped her tears hastily before turning around. Kathryn looked horrified when she saw her, making her feel even worse than she felt. "What happened to you?" she asked. Mary Margaret immediately kept her hands behind her to keep the papers from the blonde's line of vision. She looked at Mary Margaret's red-rimmed eyes with concern that surprised the bride.

Kathryn smiled at her, a warm smile. "You can tell me. We are technically family now."

Mary Margaret sniffed, hesitating for a moment. When the blonde continued to study her, she sighed and asked in a raw voice, "What if I'm making a mistake?" Kathryn's sympathetic smile disappeared at her words. "What if you were right all this time?" she added, bringing her hands in front of her. The blonde looked down at the papers then realization brightened her features.

"David told you," she said softly as if in wonder. "He finally told you."

Mary Margaret nodded, trying not to cry. "Wait here. I'll go get the girls," Kathryn said suddenly, turning and walking out the door hastily.

"Wait, no, you don't have to," she attempted but sighed when the blonde was having none of it. When Kathryn was out the door, she got the papers again and plopped back down on her chair. She looked up at her vanity and winced when she saw her mascara running. So much for waterproof make-up.

Kathryn knew just whom she needed when she saw that only Emma and Ruby came into the room with concerned faces. They both gasped at the sight of her reflection and immediately rushed to her side. "What happened?" Ruby asked, handing her a tissue. Emma knelt down beside her and placed a hand on her arm. "Did Kathryn say something?"

"No," Mary Margaret said, shaking her head. "It's not Kathryn."

"Did David write something that upset you?" Emma asked, looking up at her in concern. Her question was answered when Mary Margaret's lips started to tremble and her eyes filled with tears. "Wait, no. Don't cry. I'm sorry â€"."

"He's not coming," she whispered, a few tears falling. She blew her nose into the tissue in her hand before leaning back on her chair tiredly. "He's one of the people I want to be here, and he's not coming."

"Did he say why?" Emma asked in concern, knowing that blonde Barbie was probably going full-on Bridezilla downstairs because of the person missing in the entourage. "David's not one to miss a big day in your life."

Mary Margaret wordlessly handed the papers over to both girls. Both looked bewildered for a moment as they studied them, then the look of realization dawning on their faces was comical to watch for her. "Oh, my God," Ruby breathed out when she reached the end. "David's in love with you."

"I knew it! I knew there was something going on between you two." Emma's excited expression suddenly turned sour as she realized something. "You told me you were sleeping in last night, liar," she deadpanned.

Mary Margaret rolled her eyes at Emma's words as Ruby hit her on the arm. "Ow!" the blonde complained, rubbing the sore spot.

"David loves you," Ruby said with a confused smile. "What - what happens now?"

"It's not like I can do anything about it," the bride frowned. "I'm getting married, and â€"."

Ruby grabbed her hands and asked her seriously, "Do you really want to?" Her eyes widened at that. "Seriously, you're our friend. We know you, Mary Margaret. You're not going to react this way if you don't feel the same way as he does. So, answer me. Do you really want to get married today?"

Mary Margaret looked like a fish out of water with her mouth opening then closing. "What â€" I don't â€", she stammered.

"Do you?" Ruby and Emma asked in unison.

They can hear a pin drop in the silence of the room after that. After a long stretch of silence, Mary Margaret sighed before slowly shaking her head, looking down at her lap. Her two friends sighed tiredly as they sat back down on the couch beside her. "No," she whispered, still looking down at her hands. "No, I don't want to." She shook her head as she looked back up at them. "But it's not the right thing to do."

"Oh, screw the right thing!" Ruby exclaimed, surprising her and Emma. She took her hands in hers to make her look at her. "Look," she said. "Mary Margaret, I've known you since our days in kindergarten, and

let me tell you that you're one of the few people who always did what everyone expected her to do. I'm not saying that that's a bad thing, but sometimes you have to do what you want to do. If being with David is what you want, then go for it."

"It's not that simple," she argued.

"Yes, it is!" Emma cried. "It is, Mary Margaret. You're the only one holding yourself back from loving him because you're scared of opening your heart to him." She paused for a moment to catch her breath. "Which is weird because it's David, and we all know he's never going to hurt you."

"Yeah, and come on. This has been going on for too long, and you're finally seeing it now," Ruby added with an encouraging smile. "You're seeing it now, Mary Margaret, and it's not yet too late."

"But â€", she tried to argue.

"Take a chance," Ruby smiled at her, squeezing her hands. "Take a chance for yourself. For once, just do something no one expects you to do."

* * *

><p>James deserved an explanation. Without thinking, Mary Margaret marched out of her room, leaving her two friends confused, and knocked on the groom's dressing room. By the serious look on her face, James immediately told everyone inside to leave and give them some privacy. She had long stopped talking and was looking down at her hands that were twisting an old tissue paper anxiously.<p>

She was sitting on the couch, and James stood there in front of her with his hands on his hips. He finally said something after staring at the floor for so long. "I knew it," he said, his voice raw. She glanced up and saw his red-rimmed eyes, feeling her heart break at the sight. She caused that. "It's always been him."

"James," she whispered. "James, I'm so sorry. I loved you, I really did. You have to believe â€"."

"Loved," he repeated with a humorless chuckle. "Something I never thought I would hear on my wedding day."

More tears escaped her eyes as she stood up and stepped closer to him. "James, I never wanted to hurt you. When I said yes to marry you, I meant it. I loved you and only you, but that's changed. It's not fair for you to love someone who can't love you the way you deserve to be." James closed his eyes and sighed, shaking his head. He didn't want to believe what she was saying. "Someone out there is going to love you and look at you like the sun rises and sets with you. Believe me."

James gulped, a few tears rolling down his cheeks. "Let me guess," he breathed out before sniffing. "That someone isn't you."

Mary Margaret slowly shook her head. "No."

He squeezed his eyes shut in pain. After a moment, he sighed before opening them to look at her. "I love you," he whispered after while.

Her head dropped down at that. "I can love you enough for the both of us, Mary Margaret. I promise you, I'll make you happy. You will never want for anything. I love you. Just don't do this."

"I'm sorry," she said, shaking her head. "I can't do this to myself, and I can't do this to you, James. It's not fair for either one of us."

He turned his head to look at the windows as he breathed out anxiously. She continued to watch him and already knew what to answer what he'll say next, but he surprised her by asking in resignation, "I can't make you change your mind, can I?"

"I'm afraid not," she answered softly.

He continued to look at her before his lips turned slightly up in a broken smile. "I guess I should thank you," he said, surprising her. When Mary Margaret blinked at him in confusion, he added, "For not leaving me up there with no clue in front of everybody." Her face showed understanding before he gave her a tight smile. "Though, I still have to go explain to my parents that there won't be a wedding today."

Mary Margaret nudged him slightly, trying to lighten up the mood. "I doubt they'll be too disappointed. They never did like me that much."

She can't help but smile when he chuckled at that. "Yeah, they never did."

"Well, thank you for sugarcoating that for me," she said with an incredulous smile. He chuckled even more, wiping his remaining tears. They were both quiet for a moment before she started to slide off her engagement ring.

He stopped her hands with his and said, "Don't. That's yours." His voice caught as he said, "It's meant for you."

Mary Margaret shook her head, sliding it off completely. She placed it in his hand and closed his hand over it. "No. It belongs to someone who loves you with all her heart, someone who deserves a ring as beautiful as it is." He glanced down at their closed hands before going back to her eyes. "She's out there, James, and I promise you she would be worth the wait."

"Thank you," he said shakily, dropping his hands from hers. He stared at her for a moment before leaning forward to give her a kiss on the cheek. "Good luck, Mary Margaret."

"Goodbye, James."

* * *

><p>Surprise yourself

Everything went passed her in a blur. The moment she stepped out of James's room, everyone seemed to be curious about what was going on, but she didn't have a minute to waste. Kathryn was back to yapping angrily about something, her parents were asking her what happened in concerned tones, and some of the guests who were present to see her

run were whispering amongst themselves. Mary Margaret knew she was going to be the talk of the town for a long time, but she didn't care at the moment.

All she cared about was finding David before he leaves for good. She had no idea where to go first, but her first guess is that he had already left town. She started her car and stepped on the gas before the engine could warm up. Graham would have to forgive her for going over the speed limit. Her cellphone began to ring continuously after she drove away.

The list and David's letter were pinned down by it on the passenger seat. She didn't want to call him because she knew that he wouldn't pick up his phone. He was dramatic like that, wanting his goodbye to be remembered with a letter. She passed the town line in record speed and prayed to any god who was listening to her right now to help her find him before it was too late.

Her stomach was churning as she muttered to herself. "Come on, come on. Where are you?" She was already nearing the highway and had not seen any car in front of her yet. How fast was he going? He hasn't left that long ago if he was able to hand the letter personally to Emma. Where the hell was he?

Then as if her prayers have been answered, there he was. His car was parked at the side of the road, and the hood was propped up. His jacket was hanging on the open window and looked like it was about to fly away soon because of the wind. He had his sleeves pushed up to his elbows as he assessed the smoking engine. Mary Margaret saw his check engine light on last night but hadn't got a chance to comment on it. Thank God, she didn't comment on it.

Her tires squealed when she hit the brakes hard. Thankfully, she had enough control of the car, so it didn't turn into a complete disaster. Without thinking about her car parked hazardously in the middle of the dirt road, she jumped out of the car and shouted, "David!"

Hearing his name, David immediately tried to look up but instead bumped his head hard on the hood. Mary Margaret ran across the road and jumped into his arms. He laughed when he caught her and hugged her tightly. "What the hell are you doing here? You're supposed to be walking down the aisle by now," he murmured in her ear, his face buried in her hair.

Mary Margaret pulled back to look at him. His face was shining because of sweat, but she couldn't care less. He's here. David is still here. Then, out of nowhere, she slapped him across the face. "You're an idiot!" she cried. He looked back sharply at her like she was insane. "What the hell was that stunt you pulled? Telling me you love me and then leaving? I was right. Your brain is smaller than your eye."

"Well, you're the one to talk," he shot back. "You're the bride, and you're in the middle of some dirt road with someone who's not your groom." He ran a hand through his hair before adding, "And I told you not to come after me. I specifically told you not to question your decision, and now you made a huge mistake."

She huffed, folding her arms over her chest. "Since when have I ever

listened to you? You're supposed to be the best man, and you had the audacity not to show up! Some nerve you have! You told me you never back out on your promises."

"I never promised that I'd be there. I promised to be your friend, and I promised to give you a speech. And I did. Both of them," David said knowingly, placing his hands on his waist. "And you gave your word to James."

She watched him with steely eyes as she said, "Do you want me to go back?"

He blinked at her. "Why are you asking me? You're the bride."

"Do you?" she asked, stepping closer to him to see him gulp. "All these years, you've always done everything I asked you to and never once asked me to do something for you. You're that selfless, David Nolan, and that's one of the reasons why I love you." His mouth dropped open slightly, and his eyes went wide at the bluntness of her words.

"So, I'm asking you now," she continued, priding at the fact that her voice didn't waver once. "Do you want me to go back? Do you want me to get married and promise to spend the rest of my days with someone else?" She pointed towards the general direction of Storybrooke. "Tell me and I'll do it. Do you want me to go back there and marry someone other than the man I really love?"

David was looking at her with all the love he had for her, and it was enough to make her knees weak. "No," he whispered, shaking his head slowly with a small smile. "No, I don't want that."

She felt tears prick her eyes as she asked, "Then what do you want me to do?"

It took him a couple of long strides to get to her and cup her cheeks as he kissed her. Mary Margaret smiled as she wrapped her arms tightly around his neck to pull him closer. He pulled back all too suddenly to say, "Be mine. Please."

She grinned and nodded. "I'm yours."

"And come with me?" he asked before she could lean in for another kiss. "Let's get out of Storybrooke for a while. Just you and me. We can go anywhere you want to go."

"Anywhere?" she asked breathlessly. She had always wanted to see the world.

David nodded excitedly, leaning his forehead against hers. "Anywhere. I'll go anywhere as long as I'm with you."

Mary Margaret laughed before pulling his face down to hers. This was the start of their life together, and she couldn't wait to find out what was in store for them. This was how it was supposed to be all this time, her and David against the world. To think that this all started because he found some stupid list in her room. Her crazy, stupid, wonderful list. "I love you, David Nolan," she whispered against his lips.

"I love you, too," David said, his voice catching at the end. It was as if he marveled at the fact that he could say the words back to her. "Come on. Let's get out of here."

"What about your car?" Mary Margaret asked when he got his suitcase from his car and placed it inside hers. "You can't just leave it there."

"I'll get someone to pick it up," he answered her, already dialing a number into his phone as he walked to the driver's side. "Maybe Killian with his one eyebrow."

She laughed happily before sliding onto the passenger seat. David started the ignition before glancing over to check on her. Mary Margaret was busy looking at the list and his letter with a smile on her face before looking at him. "Keep those safe, okay?" he smiled at her.

"I will," she said before giving him a wink. He chuckled at that before driving off, leaving Storybrooke and his car behind them.

The End

* * *

><p>"Wait."<p>

"What?"

"What about my clothes? My passport?"

"Jesus. Way to ruin a perfectly good ending, Mary Margaret."

"You love me."

"You bet your ass, I do."

"I'd rather bet on your white ass, Nolan."

"That's romantic."

"Romantic's my middle name."

"No. Margaret's your middle name. You're lucky you're pretty. I might just overlook the fact that an ostrich's brain might be bigger than yours."

"Just drive."

* * *

><p>Mary Margaret's things to do before getting married:

1. Go skinny dipping in the harbor

2. Break into someone's house in the middle of the night

3. Get a tattoo

- _4. See the northern lights_
- _5. Learn how to ride a bike again_
- _6. Dance in the rain_
- _7. Receive a random letter from a loved one_
- _8. Stargaze on a high roof_
- _9. Kiss someone unexpectedly_
- _10. Surprise yourself_

* * *

><p>Author's Note: Thank you for reading! I would love to hear your thoughts about the story, so leave a review on the box below. Thanks again!

End
file.